

Original Post:

Has anyone else noticed the lack of service we are receiving from the Indiana State Library? I have some very serious concerns:

1. Inter Library Loan and Reference:

I need materials for subject matter that I am not familiar with for a teacher who has not taught before. The teacher has a general request, but we need some help with finding some specific materials so I called the State Library only to find that they are no longer in charge of ILL/reference. Monique, after I told her I need some Chinese ESL materials, referred me to Indiana Share which I found out is the new ILL. (Why can't we stick with a name that we are familiar with???) Then I was told I had to call a number that was NOT toll free. The nice person who answered the phone told me I needed an account. I asked what for and was told that in order to fill a request I needed an account. I then found that I have to search OCLC WorldCat and place my request. I was also **told** they could not help me find materials because they had so many requests. When I called INCOLSA's reference centers they would help me by sorting through materials and finding what I really need, I would like this service back asap as I really need simple sentence structure with grammar and some vocabulary for my Chinese students who speak very little English. And I really don't have hours to spend searching for materials. I am so disappointed in the service I received from the State Library and I don't know what to do about it.

From the website: Have a stumper or don't have the time to hunt for an answer? Let us! The State Library offers reference services for state employees via Chat, email, telephone, or just come by the second-floor Reference Desk.

I think we should have the same privileges as the state employees.

2. INSPIRE:

I am also not happy with what has happened to INSPIRE. We have a lot of usable real estate on the screen and now we get little boxes that need to be enlarged so that students can see the results. When students search and see the word "Complete!" they have no idea why they don't see results. I have to teach the students to scroll down in the skinny box and then we get results from IN.gov before the useable results. I think if IN.gov is going to be listed it should be last as we are getting standards instead of research material. Our middle school students also have difficulty navigating the site. Please make INSPIRE more user friendly.

Does anyone else think we are getting less service than we used to or is it just my school that is having problems?

While I was composing this email Jake Speer did return my call and has assured me that I will receive the Chinese ESL materials that our students and teacher desperately need, but I should not have to call the Library Development Office to receive service that used to be readily available.

Kathy Rendant
Media Specialist
Northview HS

Responses:

Amen. When all the "changes" happened, schools let out for the summer. Now that we are back, they need to hear from us!

I have never liked the web feat feature on Inspire. I teach my students to go directly to the Student Research Center link on the left hand of the first screen. It is much easier to use than the web feat.

I agree. I am not fond of the Interlibrary loan service. Things are getting too difficult and I am uncomfortable with how the requesting is done.

I am equally concerned that work is becoming much more difficult through the state library. I am concerned that by saying so, I will be considered an "old fogey" who likes things as they were: user friendly and public library supportive. My concern is that much of what I receive seems to be publicity-driven, that is, things designed to promote the state library, not to truly assist Indiana libraries. This causes me a great deal of apprehension, but I am concerned about voicing my opinions lest there be some form of retribution. I hate it that I feel that way.

Old fogey that I am: In the past, I always felt that the ISL LDO was supportive, not judgmental, of libraries. Now I am just uncomfortable and am unsure where we stand.

I also have a great concern about the professional development office, wondering if we really need for consultants to spend their time visiting libraries as much as they do. I wonder if we need that much staff for this purpose or whether our money and support could be spent elsewhere.

I am also wondering where my certificates are for SAMS conference attendance of Aug 21. I fear the whole certification/LEU thing is a make-work exercise, a make-state-position exercise. I understand the need for certification standards. I

am concerned about the ISL's ability to be timely in certifying courses, events, and in supplying certificates of work completed/sessions attended.

I do apologize to any state library employees who read this and get their feelings hurt—some of the veterans know I am not pointing the finger at them. As a whole, however, I am concerned that the feeling of Indiana team players for libraries has disintegrated...that the credibility of ISL has been weakened in the last year or so.

Fortunately, there are a lot of us “old foggy’s” around so don’t feel like you are alone. Our library also has experienced a decline in the quality of services that we used to take for granted—inter-library loan, delivery, INSPIRE, etc. I can’t help but think it is in part if not all the result of losing membership-driven services from INCOLSA and having them replaced by non-membership-driven services from the State. And I fear things are going to get worse before they get better, if they ever do.

Retribution? I have my own personal thoughts about the competence of selected individuals at ISL which I will not share in this email, and like you I wonder at times if some sort of retaliation will take place if I voice my concerns so I tend to keep those thoughts to myself. However, if I ever got wind of some sort of untoward action against a colleague for voicing her opinion I would not stand idly by and let it go unanswered. I don’t live or work so far from downtown Indianapolis that I could not drive there in an hour’s time if I had to and personally deliver my opinion regarding such an action to someone at 140 North Senate Avenue and/or even across the street.

Karen speaks of fearing retribution for speaking forthrightly about services--or lack thereof--provided by the Indiana State Library, since some ugly things have happened to those librarians who have voiced their concerns in the past about the ISL.

In addition, I have several friends who work at the ISL, and sadly, they will tell you that several employees there have been intimidated (or even forced out of their job) for their criticism of the way the State Library is being run.

I have found by experience over the years that managers of organizations, including state agencies, who cannot lead effectively, and by example, have to resort to bullying to persuade others to agree with them and/or advance their agendas.

Well said!

Wow it sounds as if we are in for some rough sledding with reference services!! why am I not surprised?

We too are experiencing issues. Our ILL issues are affecting service to our patrons. In order for your problems to hopefully be addressed, I would suggest you send your email of concerns to *****. She was at our library yesterday and I expressed problems we are having and she said while she is "hearing" about problems when she is out in the field visiting libraries, she needs to have people put their issues in writing and email them to her. She is an experienced ILL person and says she will get the information to the correct people. Hope this helps.

I can't address your problems, but can commiserate!

I have found one very helpful place for teachers needing curriculum guides, professional development materials, etc is to send them to Shared Information Services. It is a teacher resource library that is funded by the Indiana Department of Education, so it is totally free to any adult -- teachers, parents, home school folks -- who lives in the great state of Indiana. Their collection is searchable AND REQUESTABLE online and materials can be sent via INfoExpress to any library in the state (though the patron must confirm that their library is willing to accept their materials, primarily out of courtesy) for their easy pick-up and return. It is a vastly underutilized resource crammed full of books, posters, games, professional journals, and the like. The director will even visit your area with a book display if you call ahead and request a visit. The nice thing is, the PATRON needs to sign up for an SIS patron account, making them responsible to locate and request their own materials, but they still come and visit YOUR library for pick up and drop off.

I encourage you to check it out. Their location is

www.bsu.edu/sis

Their physical location is inside the Burris Laboratory School Building (Room 120) on the Ball State University Campus.

We're having the same issues. Since Allen County PL has pulled out of ILL, we receive more cancelled requests than fulfilled requests. It's very frustrating because our materials budget keeps shrinking so we really rely on ILL to fill in the blanks.

I haven't used Inspire much since the changeover, but my reference librarians are very unhappy with it. In fact we just got a quote today for InfoTrac because they just aren't getting helpful search results from Inspire. It's \$4800 for us so that won't be happening.

I think many of us share your concerns.

I am not happy that we have to go to a free source online catalog. My goodness, how many times are there going to be changes, hoping for the better, yet not getting there?

My latest ISL pet peeve: they encouraged us all to sign up for their new listserve, inlibraries. I did so. The only ONLY result I have seen is I now get three of everything instead of the usual two (incolsa-l and inpublib), including anything put out by ISL. News releases, Friday Facts, something on Wednesday, and who knows what else.

Everything in dark blue is from one person's email:

Colleagues –

I work in a special library & have the same concerns. I will attach a response that I received when I too needed an ILL. I sent a copy of the e-mail to Michael Piper just to let him know how much things had changed & how the level of service has deteriorated. I'm also including his response. I'm glad to know that I'm not the only one unhappy with the level of service.

Attachment:

Thank you for asking about where to direct your dissatisfaction with services from the Indiana State Library. I hope the situation has improved since our earlier correspondence. The complaint escalation process for any state agency works like this: your first contact should be to the service manager. If that contact is unproductive, your next recourse is to contact the head of the agency. If you are still dissatisfied, your next options include contacting the agency oversight body, with copies to the Governor's office and your legislators. I've provided pertinent addresses below.

Thanks again for taking the time to write. I am sorry to hear about your negative experiences, and wish you every future success in resolving these issues. Please contact me whenever I may be helpful.

P.S. Have you approached your local public library? Chances are, they are an InfoExpress member, and may be willing to request the item on your behalf.

1) Service manager

Jacob Speer
Library Development Office
Indiana State Library
140 North Senate Ave.
Indianapolis IN 46204-2296
(317) 232-3715

jspeer@library.IN.gov

2) Agency head

Roberta L. Brooker, State Librarian
Indiana State Library
140 North Senate Ave.
Indianapolis IN 46204-2296
Phone: (317) 232-3692 Fax: (317) 232-3713
rbrooker@library.in.gov

3) Agency oversight body

Tom Hamm, Chair
Indiana Library and Historical Board
Indiana State Library
140 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis IN 46204-2296
tomh@earlham.edu

4) Governor's office liaison

Anita Samuel
Assistant General Counsel
Office of the Governor
Indiana Statehouse
Indianapolis IN 46204-2797
(317) 232-4567

5) Finding your legislators

Who's your legislator
<http://www.in.gov/apps/sos/legislator/search/>

I don't know if my supervisor got back with you. I know you
> called on July 11 about not having InfoExpress to ship books to
> you. He just sent me a response e-mail yesterday afternoon, so I'm
> guessing he's been attempting to figure it out. All to say, he
> said the only options are to get books from IMCPL only , arrange
> your own ILL, or join InfoExpress.

Thanks, for trying. However, please tell him for me & anyone else

- > at the State Library that service to Special Libraries outside of
- > Indy is not on par with what INCOLSA provided us. Do you have the
- > name of someone I can speak with regarding this diminished service?
- >
- > This book is probably out of scope for IMCPL and I don't request
- > enough ILL's to warrant paying the INFOEXPRESS fee, besides,
- > there's no guarantee that this book is available from any of the
- > other libraries using INFOEXPRESS.
- >
- > Needless to say, I am very unhappy with the attitude of the State
- > Library (not yours though) & the way service is now being provided.
- >

The State Library still provides reference to all Indiana citizens. ILL changed.

When I saw the concerns that were addressed in the email, I immediately contacted the State Library to make certain that they were aware. I want to assure you that AIME is continuing to work with the State Library in making certain that the same level of services are available to school media specialists. Since I was not aware that there was a problem with either Inspire (I have high school students and they have been doing OK with it) or ILL (I've never used it), I couldn't address these problems before now, but am glad to be able to do something now.

I would encourage you to contact Robert Brooker (rbrooker@library.IN.gov) directly if you continue to have issues or concerns. I've spoken with her myself and she is very willing to make certain school media specialists have the services that they need.

I hope your school year is off to a good start. Please let me know if I may be of further assistance.

The state library online interlibrary loan was nice to use, but I'm still waiting for the book which I need in one day(and sent the request weeks ago). I never had any trouble when INCOLSA ran it. I know some other librarians also have concerns about services, so I thought I would share mine.

In regards to your email to INlibraries I totally agree with you. I am glad someone finally had the nerve to send something like that out on one of the listservs. There are more books lost via Pillow than there was with Lanter. You do not get quick responses.

We have all noticed.